

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of all claims in the application.

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1. (Original) A method of plating silver on a substrate by a displacement plating reaction provided with a copper surface comprising a) depositing a first metal which is more noble than copper on the substrate in a first method step and b) plating silver on said substrate in a second method step, with the proviso that the first metal is deposited at a rate that is at most half the rate of plating of silver in the second method step when the first metal is silver.
2. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the first metal is palladium or gold.
3. (Original) The method according to claim 2, wherein palladium is plated from an acidic solution.
4. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~one of the claims 2 and 3~~ claim 2, wherein palladium is plated from a solution containing sulfuric acid.

5. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the first metal is silver and the rate of silver deposition from a silver deposition bath in the first method step is regulated by adjusting at least one deposition parameter and/or by adjusting the composition of the silver bath.

6. (Original) The method according to claim 5, wherein the rate of silver deposition in the first method step is regulated by adjusting the processing temperature.

7. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~one of the claims 5 and 6~~ claim 5, wherein the rate of deposition of the silver in the first method step is regulated by using a Cu(I) complexing agent in the silver bath.

8. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~one of the previous claims~~ claim 1, wherein silver is plated in the second method step with a plating bath containing at least one silver halide complex.

9. (Original) The method according to claim 8, wherein the silver halide complex is a silver bromide complex.

10. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~one of the previous claims~~ claim 1, wherein silver is plated in the second method step with a bath having a pH ranging from 4 to 6.

11. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~one of the previous claims~~ claim 1, wherein silver is plated in the second method step with a plating bath that additionally contains at least one Cu(I) complexing agent.

12. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 11, wherein the at least one Cu(I) complexing agent is selected from the group ~~comprising~~ consisting of 2,2'-bipyridine, 1,10-phenanthroline, 2,6-bis-[pyridyl-(2)]-pyridine, 2,2'-bichinoline, 2,2'-bipyridine-5-carboxylic acid, 2,2'-bipyridine-4,4'-dicarboxylic acid, 4,7-dihydroxy-1,10-phenanthroline as well as derivatives thereof.

13. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~one of the previous claims~~ claim 1, wherein silver is plated in the second method step with a plating bath that additionally contains at least one Cu(II) complexing agent.

14. (Currently amended) The method according to 13, wherein the at least one Cu(II) complexing agent is selected from the group consisting of ~~comprising~~ ethylene diamine, alanine diacetic acid, amino trimethylene phosphonic acid, diethylene triamine pentamethylene phosphonic acid and 1-hydroxyethylene-1,1-diphosphonic acid.

15. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~one of the previous claims~~ claim 1, wherein silver is plated in the second method step with a plating bath that additionally contains at least one surface active agent.

16. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~one of the previous claims~~ claim 1, wherein the substrate is cleaned and/or etched prior to performing the first method step.
17. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 16, wherein, for cleaning and/or etching, the substrate is contacted with an acidic solution containing at least one peroxo compound selected from the group consisting of ~~comprising~~ alkali peroxo disulfate, alkali caroate and hydrogen peroxide prior to performing the first method step.
18. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~one of the previous claims~~ claim 1, wherein the method is carried out as a horizontal conveyORIZED method.
19. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~one of the previous claims~~ claim 1, wherein the substrate is a printed circuit board material and wherein in the second method step silver is plated for subsequently performing a soldering process, a bonding process, for press-fit technology and/or for making electrical contacts.
20. (New) A method of plating a bendable and/or solderable layer of silver on a substrate by a displacement plating reaction provided with a copper surface comprising a) depositing a first metal which is more noble than copper on the substrate in a first method step and b) plating silver on said substrate in a second method step to form said bendable and/or solderable layer of silver, with the proviso that the first metal is deposited at a rate

that is at most half the rate of plating of silver in the second method step when the first metal is silver.